

From the INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

COPY

MAY 17 2006

PCT RECEIVED BY: RB

To:

ALSTON & BIRD LLP
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Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT AND
THE WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SEARCHING AUTHORITY, OR THE DECLARATION

(PCT Rule 44.1)

Date of mailing (day/month/year)	12/05/2006
Applicant's or agent's file reference 18360/303711	FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraphs 1 and 4 below
International application No. PCT/US2005/043400	International filing date (day/month/year) 29/11/2005
Applicant UNITED PARCEL SERVICE OF AMERICA, INC.	

1. ☒ The applicant is hereby notified that the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority have been established and are transmitted herewith.

Filing of amendments and statement under Article 19:

The applicant is entitled, if he so wishes, to amend the claims of the International Application (see Rule 46):

When? The time limit for filing such amendments is normally two months from the date of transmittal of the International Search Report.

Where? Directly to the International Bureau of WIPO, 34 chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, Facsimile No.: (41-22) 338.82.70

For more detailed instructions, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. ☐ The applicant is hereby notified that no international search report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority are transmitted herewith.
3. ☐ **With regard to the protest** against payment of (an) additional fee(s) under Rule 40.2, the applicant is notified that:
- ☐ the protest together with the decision thereon has been transmitted to the International Bureau together with the applicant's request to forward the texts of both the protest and the decision thereon to the designated Offices.
- ☐ no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

4. Reminders


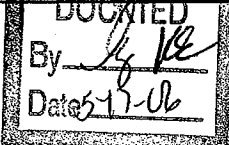
Shortly after the expiration of **18 months** from the priority date, the international application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the international application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication.

The applicant may submit comments on an informal basis on the written opinion of the International Searching Authority to the International Bureau. The International Bureau will send a copy of such comments to all designated Offices unless an international preliminary examination report has been or is to be established. These comments would also be made available to the public but not before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date.

Within **19 months** from the priority date, but only in respect of some designated Offices, a demand for international preliminary examination must be filed if the applicant wishes to postpone the entry into the national phase **until 30 months** from the priority date (in some Offices even later); otherwise, the applicant must, **within 20 months** from the priority date, perform the prescribed acts for entry into the national phase before those designated Offices.

In respect of other designated Offices, the time limit of **30 months** (or later) will apply even if no demand is filed within 19 months.

See the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 and, for details about the applicable time limits, Office by Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters and the WIPO Internet site.

Name and mailing address of the International Searching Authority  European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Olga Benitez	
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NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220

These Notes are intended to give the basic instructions concerning the filing of amendments under article 19. The Notes are based on the requirements of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Regulations and the Administrative Instructions under that Treaty. In case of discrepancy between these Notes and those requirements, the latter are applicable. For more detailed information, see also the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, a publication of WIPO.

In these Notes, "Article", "Rule", and "Section" refer to the provisions of the PCT, the PCT Regulations and the PCT Administrative Instructions, respectively.

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING AMENDMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 19

The applicant has, after having received the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority, one opportunity to amend the claims of the international application. It should however be emphasized that, since all parts of the international application (claims, description and drawings) may be amended during the international preliminary examination procedure, there is usually no need to file amendments of the claims under Article 19 except where, e.g. the applicant wants the latter to be published for the purposes of provisional protection or has another reason for amending the claims before international publication. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that provisional protection is available in some States only (see *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume I/A, Annexes B1 and B2).

The attention of the applicant is drawn to the fact that amendments to the claims under Article 19 are not allowed where the International Searching Authority has declared, under Article 17(2), that no international search report would be established (see *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume I/A, paragraph 296).

What parts of the international application may be amended?

Under Article 19, only the claims may be amended.

During the international phase, the claims may also be amended (or further amended) under Article 34 before the International Preliminary Examining Authority. The description and drawings may only be amended under Article 34 before the International Examining Authority.

Upon entry into the national phase, all parts of the international application may be amended under Article 28 or, where applicable, Article 41.

When?

Within 2 months from the date of transmittal of the international search report or 16 months from the priority date, whichever time limit expires later. It should be noted, however, that the amendments will be considered as having been received on time if they are received by the International Bureau after the expiration of the applicable time limit but before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication (Rule 46.1).

Where not to file the amendments?

The amendments may only be filed with the International Bureau and not with the receiving Office or the International Searching Authority (Rule 46.2).

Where a demand for international preliminary examination has been/is filed, see below.

How?

Either by cancelling one or more entire claims, by adding one or more new claims or by amending the text of one or more of the claims as filed.

A replacement sheet must be submitted for each sheet of the claims which, on account of an amendment or amendments, differs from the sheet originally filed.

All the claims appearing on a replacement sheet must be numbered in Arabic numerals. Where a claim is cancelled, no renumbering of the other claims is required. In all cases where claims are renumbered, they must be renumbered consecutively (Section 205(b)).

The amendments must be made in the language in which the international application is to be published.

What documents must/may accompany the amendments?

Letter (Section 205(b)):

The amendments must be submitted with a letter.

The letter will not be published with the international application and the amended claims. It should not be confused with the "Statement under Article 19(1)" (see below, under "Statement under Article 19(1)").

The letter must be in English or French, at the choice of the applicant. However, if the language of the international application is English, the letter must be in English; if the language of the international application is French, the letter must be in French.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 18360/303711	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/US2005/043400	International filing date (day/month/year) 29/11/2005	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 30/11/2004
Applicant UNITED PARCEL SERVICE OF AMERICA, INC.		

This international search report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This international search report consists of a total of 4 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of:

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
☐ a translation of the international application into _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b))

b. ☐ With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.

2. ☐ **Certain claims were found unsearchable** (See Box No. II)

3. ☐ **Unity of invention is lacking** (see Box No III)

4. With regard to the **title**,

- ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant
☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the **abstract**,

- ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant
☐ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority

6. With regard to the **drawings**,

- a. the figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 1
☐ as suggested by the applicant
☒ as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure
☐ as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention
 b. ☐ none of the figures is to be published with the abstract

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. G07B17/00 G06Q10/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

G07B G06Q

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	WO 02/058308 A (ABB AUTOMATION, INC) 25 July 2002 (2002-07-25) page 2, line 1 - page 3, line 15 -----	1-56
Y	US 2004/188522 A1 (ASHAARI SHAHPOUR) 30 September 2004 (2004-09-30) figures 1,12,13 paragraph [0005] paragraph [0007] - paragraph [0009] paragraph [0031] - paragraph [0038] -----	1-56
A	US 2004/083228 A1 (RAINEY BRENT A ET AL) 29 April 2004 (2004-04-29) paragraph [0010] - paragraph [0013] paragraph [0024] - paragraph [0033] paragraph [0038] - paragraph [0048] ----- -/--	1-56



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *Z* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

4 May 2006

Date of mailing of the international search report

12/05/2006

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
 Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
 Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Papastefanou, E

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5 043 908 A (MANDULEY ET AL) 27 August 1991 (1991-08-27) the whole document -----	1-56
A	US 2004/054552 A1 (AMONETTE THOMAS M ET AL) 18 March 2004 (2004-03-18) abstract paragraph [0009] - paragraph [0013] -----	1,13,33, 38,51
A	US 6 195 174 B1 (JOHNSON ROBERT J ET AL) 27 February 2001 (2001-02-27) column 3, line 49 - column 4, line 48 column 5, line 34 - line 49 -----	1

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
WO 02058308	A	25-07-2002	US	2002092801 A1	18-07-2002
US 2004188522	A1	30-09-2004	NONE		
US 2004083228	A1	29-04-2004	NONE		
US 5043908	A	27-08-1991	NONE		
US 2004054552	A1	18-03-2004	NONE		
US 6195174	B1	27-02-2001	NONE		

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To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY
(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/US2005/043400

International filing date (day/month/year)
29.11.2005

Priority date (day/month/year)
30.11.2004

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
INV. G07B17/00 G06Q10/00

Applicant
UNITED PARCEL SERVICE OF AMERICA, INC.

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas
Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl
Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016

Date of completion of
this opinion

see form
PCT/ISA/210

Authorized Officer

Papastefanou, E

Telephone No. +31 70 340-3999



Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
 - ☐ a translation of the international application into , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1 (b)).
2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
 - ☐ a sequence listing
 - ☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
 - ☐ on paper
 - ☐ in electronic form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
 - ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
 - ☐ filed together with the international application in electronic form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-56
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-56
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-56
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

The following documents were cited in the International Search Report. They may be referred to during this procedure:

- D1: WO 02/058308 A (ABB AUTOMATION, INC) 25 July 2002 (2002-07-25)
- D2: US 2004/188522 A1 (ASHAARI SHAHPOUR) 30 September 2004 (2004-09-30)
- D3: US 2004/083228 A1 (RAINEY BRENT A ET AL) 29 April 2004 (2004-04-29)
- D4: US-A-5 043 908 (MANDULEY ET AL) 27 August 1991 (1991-08-27)
- D5: US 2004/054552 A1 (AMONETTE THOMAS M ET AL) 18 March 2004 (2004-03-18)
- D6: US-B1-6 195 174 (JOHNSON ROBERT J ET AL) 27 February 2001 (2001-02-27)

1. The present application relates to a method and a system for facilitating delivery and tracking of a plurality of mail pieces sorted into a plurality of containers to a postal service.

1.2 The facilitated process of delivery and tracking, as defined in the application consists a series of stages:

- i. the mail pieces are sorted according to destination information obtained from the mail pieces by the system and put into containers accordingly;
- ii. each container receives an identification code generated by the system;
- iii. the system tracks the containers using a plurality of tracking devices that read the identification codes of the containers
- iv. the system correlates the mail piece information, the identification code and the information obtained from the tracking devices to create a manifest which is communicated to the consignee.

2. All these features are well known in the art.

2.1 Sorting mail pieces according to destination data is standard practice in mailing systems. D1 for example, describes a system reading address data from mail pieces and sorting them into containers according to ZIP code (see passages in the Search Report).

2.2 Tracking of mail pieces or other shipped items using identification codes is also standard practice. Document D2 for example describes a method of tracking mailings. Mailings are created by a mailer and combined into shipments, which can be containers containing the mailings. Each mailing receives an identification code that is obtained by the

destination date and each shipment receives an identification code which can be written in a label attached to the container. Scanners along the delivery route of the shipment read the identification code of the shipment and the system is thus able to track its movement and delivery. Mailing information - which is considered to correspond to a manifest - comprising the shipment identification code is collected and sent to the various transit and destination points for tracking purposes (see passages in the Search Report). Similar tracking systems are also described in documents D3 and D4.

3. Since, as it appears from the application, the sorting phase has no influence on the tracking phase, it is considered that these two steps address different partial problems. Indeed, there seems to be no additional technical effect by the combination of these two activities in one method. It is thus considered that the combination of two known methods does not yield any new inventive method, in the sense of Art.33(3) PCT. To the skilled person who would be faced with the two separate partial problems related to sorting and tracking of mail pieces, the implementation of methods, as well as their corresponding systems or devices, which are well known in the state of the art would be within his normal practice and would not require any inventive skill.

Consequently, the subject matter of the independent claims 1, 13, 33, 38 and 51 is not inventive in the sense of Art. 33(3) PCT.

4. The dependent claims define features that do not go beyond those well known in the art. Features such as the use of bar codes, bar code scanners, the optical detection of the identification codes on the containers, the calculation of cost or the generation of electronic bills are all known and their implementation in the present system (and corresponding method) would be obvious to the skilled person. Hence the subject matter of dependent claims 2-12, 14-32, 34-37, 39-50 and 52-56 is also void of any inventive step in the sense of Art. 33(3) PCT.